### IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

EVELYN N. VARGAS, Plaintiff, vs.	) ) ) No.	OOC			9
CITY OF CHICAGO / DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH; ALEX KASPER, in his	) )  Jury Tri )	ial Demanded			DOCK
official capacity and individually and LaNETTE GARCIA, in her official capacity and individually,  Defendants.	) ) ) ()	UDGE LINDBERG	US 250	025316	AUG 2
COMPL FOR VIOLATION OF CIVILARIS	-AINT ATELIAW IHTS AND PEN	) GE BOBRICK NDANT STATE CLA	200 101 VE	79 13 77 50	

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, EVELYN VARGAS, by and through her counsel, JOSEPH M. WILLIAMS, who present this Complaint, complaining of the Defendants, and state as follows:

### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 1. That this is an action seeking redress for rights guaranteed to the Plaintiff by the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and 42 U.S.C., 2000e, et seq., including 2000 e (a,b,h), 2000 e-2, 2000 e-2 (a) (1), 2000 e-2 (e) (Title VII), Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Sec. 701 (a,b,h), as well as 29 C.F.R., Sec. 1606-2.
- That the jurisdiction of this Count is invoked pursuant to 28 U.S.C., Secs. 1331; 42
   U.S.C. 2000 e-2 (a) (1); 2000 e (b), and the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S.
   Constitution.
- That venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C., Sec. 1391 (b).

### THE PARTIES

That the Plaintiff, EVELYN VARGAS, is a citizen and resident of Du Page County,
 State of Illinois and the Federal Northern District of Illinois and at all times relevant

- hereto was an employee of the City of Chicago, Department of Public Health.
- That the City of Chicago, Public Health Department, is a municipal entity, being a body corporate and politic.
- 6. That ALEX KASPER was an Administrator and supervisor at the said Public Health Department, City of Chicago, and an immediate supervisor of the Plaintiff at her employment, at all times relevant hereto.
- 7. That at all times relevant hereto, LaNETTE GARCIA was an Assistant Administrator at the City of Chicago, Department of Public Health and a supervisor of EVELYN VARGAS.

### COUNT I

# VIOLATION OF TITLE VII, BASED UPON EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION BASED UPON NATIONAL ORIGIN

- 1 7. That the Plaintiff realleges and reasserts Paragraphs 1 7, hereinabove, asParagraphs 1 7 of this Count I.
- 8. That the Plaintiff, EVELYN VARGAS, is a Puerto Rican, being of non-white, Hispanic origin, thus, as such, being a member of a protected class.
- That the Plaintiff began employment with the Defendant City of Chicago,
   Department of Public Health in or about February of 1996, initially as a secretary.
- 10. That on a continuing basis during the course of Plaintiff's employment, beginning in or about February 1999, until she was constructively discharged on or about June 26, 2000, she was discriminated against in her employment, based upon her national origin, being a non-white Hispanic from Puerto Rico, by her direct supervisors ALEX KASPER and LaNETTE GARCIA, who in their official capacities, were acting as agents and supervisory employees of the Defendant employer.

- 11. That the municipal Defendant, by and through its agents and supervisory employees, KASPER and GARCIA, subjected the Plaintiff to derogatory remarks, ethnic slurs, embarrassment, harassment, discrimination and abuse at work.
- 12. That the discriminatory actions of the municipal Defendant through its agents, as aforestated, created a hostile work environment based upon pervasive and severe harassment and invidious discrimination which altered the terms and conditions of her employment, both subjectively and objectively.
- That the Plaintiff complained directly, numerous times by telephone and by leaving messages, to the immediate supervisors of KASPER and GARCIA, Kasper being the husband of Garcia, Steve O'CHOA and William CARD, but the former, O'Choa, never returned Plaintiff's calls, and the latter did nothing to aid the Plaintiff, demonstrating that the municipal Defendant knew or should have known of the discrimination accorded Plaintiff, and acted negligently or recklessly with respect to the harassment of the Plaintiff and wholly failed to take reasonable, or any, appropriate remedial action.
- 14. That the agents, and supervisory employees of the municipal Defendant are apparently, white Caucasian, not of Puerto Rican extraction.
- That, specifically, KASPER mocked at the language and manner of speaking of the Plaintiff, making fun of her pronunciation; he stated that as a Puerto Rican, her mascot should be a flying cockroach; in or about March, 1999, he stated that if Vargas was turned upside down she would look like a mop; made fun of Plaintiff in front of other employees and the public and when she became upset and, or cried, would call her a cry-baby.
- 16. That other employment harassment and discrimination by the named agents and

supervisory employees of the municipal Defendant include, punching out the Plaintiff's time card when she hadn't left; screaming loudly at Plaintiff in front of patients; pointing fingers directly in the Plaintiff's face when speaking to her; claiming she was overusing the telephone when she had not done so, in or about September, 1999, ignoring her; failing to respond to her greetings; talking to her in harsh and unfriendly tones, different from other employees; and telling her repeatedly to quit if she didn't like it.

- 17. That in February, 1999, Plaintiff requested KASPER to stop the discriminatory behavior and harassment, but was then discriminated against further by being demoted from secretary to a clerk-typist, moved into a less favorable location in the office, was continuously watched and monitored, as if a child, and continuously subjected to ongoing verbal abuse and derogatory remarks, based upon Plaintiff's national origin, thus, constituting retaliatory conduct for her complaint.
- 18. That on or about September 14, 1999, Plaintiff filed a charge with the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC), alleging Title VII discrimination based upon natural origin and retaliation. Exhibit "A".
- 19. That since filing the charge, Plaintiff, who had never been specifically disciplined prior, was disciplined twice.
- 20. That the harassment and discrimination and holding Plaintiff up to ridicule at Plaintiff's workplace, creating a hostile environment, which continued and escalated to the point that she was constructively discharged on or about June 26, 2000.
- 21. That the Defendant has a practice or custom of such harassment based upon national origin and has done so to others, including former employee Kathy LUNA.

22. That the EEOC reached a determination that the Respondent, here the municipal Defendant, was an "employer" within the meaning of Title VII and that:

"the evidence in the investigation establishes reasonable cause to believe that Respondent has violated Title VII by subjecting (the) charging party, and a class of employees, to a hostile and offensive work environment because of their national origin. This environment includes, but is not necessarily limited to, harassment, stereotyping, and offensive and derogatory comments and remarks about the employees' national origin: Exhibit "B"

- 23. That on May 18, 2000, the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, issued a "Notice of Right to Sue" (Exhibit "C"), within 90 days, Plaintiff, thus, having exhausted her administrative remedies.
- 24. That the discriminatory and harassing conduct hereinabove alleged, altered the terms, conditions and privileges of her employment, based upon her national origin.
- 25. That the Plaintiff is still unemployed.
- 26. That the Plaintiff, due to the above-pled facts, has been injured in fact, economically and otherwise, having been, thus, caused to suffer a nervous breakdown with physical impact and having to see mental health professionals and take varied medications for her induced medical conditions.

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff, EVELYN VARGAS, respectfully requests that this Court:

- a. Enter judgment against the City of Chicago, Department of Public Health;
- b. Award her reinstatement, with all proper promotions;
- c. Award her lost back-pay;
- d. Award her attorneys fees and costs of this action;
- e. Such other and further relief in the premises as is just and proper.

#### COUNT II

## VIOLATION OF 42 U.S.C., SEC. 1983, EQUAL PROTECTION VIOLATION - MUNICIPAL DEFENDANT

- That this is an action seeking redress for the violation of Plaintiff's right to Equal Protection of the laws, based upon the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Equal Protection Clause thereof, as well as 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1983.
- 2. That jurisdiction of this Court is invoked pursuant to 42 U.S.C., Sec. 1983, as well as 28 U.S.C., Sec. 1331, and the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution.
- 3. That venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. 1391 (b).
- 4 17. That the Plaintiff realleges and reasserts the allegation of Paragraphs 4 17 of Count I, as Paragraphs 4 17 of this Count II.
- 18. That the Plaintiff had a property interest in her public employment.
- 19. That the Defendant, through its policy making and control employees and, or agents, including KASPER and GARCIA, arbitrarily, capriciously and unconstitutionally deprived the Plaintiff of her constitutional rights, her property interest in her public employment, as a policy, custom or usage, as to her as a class, or as to that class of employees similarly situated, by treating non-white Puerto Rican employees differently, with no justifiable basis for the distinction.
- That the municipal Defendant acted pursuant to color of law.
- 21. That the Plaintiff has been treated differently and unequally based upon malicious, vindictive and irrational municipal action, which violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, as well as Sec. 1983 of 42 U.S.C., and, thus, denies equal protection of the laws to the Plaintiff.
- 22. That the Plaintiff has been injured in her constitutional rights and financially as well

as emotionally, with physical impact, as a direct and proximate result of said actions of the municipal Defendant.

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff, EVELYN VARGAS respectfully requests that this Court:

- Enter judgment against the City of Chicago of Public Health;
- Award the Plaintiff compensatory damages in an amount in excess of Fifty
   Thousand Dollars;
- c: Award Plaintiff attorney's fees and costs, pursuant to 42 U.S.C., Sec. 1988;
- d. For said other and further relief in the premises as is just and proper.

### **COUNT III**

## VIOLATION OF 42 U.S.C. 1983 INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANTS LIABLE

- 1 18. THAT the Plaintiff realleges and reasserts the allegation of Paragraphs 1 18, of
   Count II, as Paragraphs 1 18 of this Count III.
- 19. That the individual Defendants, KASPER and GARCIA, and both of them, have, as individuals, arbitrarily, capriciously and knowingly, with intent, or recklessly, violated well-settled principals of law and participated in a continuing violation of Plaintiff's rights to constitutional equal protection, based upon the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Plaintiff's property interest in her employment, as a custom or practice, under color of law.
- 20. That the individual Defendants, and each of them, exceeded their delegated authority by knowing or reckless, wrongful violation of the rights of the Plaintiff.
  - 21. That due to said Defendant's wrongful, arbitrarily intentional actions, they have misused and exceeded their lawful authority, officially, and have grievously injured Plaintiff in fact, in her property and constitutional rights, as well as financially, as

individuals.

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff, EVELYN VARGAS, respectfully requests that this Count:

- a. Enter judgment in favor of the Plaintiff and against the individual Defendants, ALEX ASPER and LaNETTE GARCIA:
- Award Plaintiff actual damages, as adduced by the evidence, awarded jointly and severely;
- c. Award punitive damages as determined to be appropriate as to each individual Defendant;
- d. Award attorney's fees and costs;
- e. Such other and further relief in the premises as is just and proper.

### **COUNT IV**

# PENDANT JURISDICTION MUNICIPAL DEFENDANT - INTENTIONAL INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

- 1. That this as an action seeking redress for the intentional infliction of mental distress.
- 2. That this action is brought pursuant to Illinois law.
- 3. That this action is premised on this Court's pendant jurisdiction.
- 4 17. That the Plaintiff realleges and reasserts the allegations of Paragraphs 4 17, of Count II, hereinabove, as Paragraphs 4 17 of this Count IV.
- 18. That the conduct of the municipal Defendant, by and through its agents or supervisory employees was intentional and malicious or done with reckless disregard.
- 19. That the said conduct was extreme and outrageous, objectively, and beyond all bounds of decency, pursuant to Illinois law.

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20. That the Plaintiff has suffered depression, humiliation, mental stress, psychological problems, has required medical and psychological treatment at great expense and has been required and is still required to be medically and mentally treated and to take various drugs and medications as a result, causing damage and injury, in fact, is a proximate result.

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff, EVELYN VARGAS, respectfully requests that this Court:

- a. Enter judgment against the City of Chicago, Department of Public Health;
- Award the Plaintiff compensatory damages in an amount in excess of Fifty b: Thousand Dollars;
- Award Plaintiff attorneys fees and costs; C.
- d. For such other and further relief in the premises as is just and proper.

Respectfully Submitted,

### **VERIFICATION**

That, the undersigned, the Plaintiff herein, doth affirm and state pursuant to penalty of law that the facts pled in this Complaint are true and correct to the best of her knowledge, other than as to where the pleading is on information and belief, if any.

Joseph M. Williams Attorney No. 3128789 209 North Hale, Suite 201 Wheaton, Illinois 60187 (630) 462-7979 / Fax (630) 462-8067

Case: 1:00-cv-05039 Document #: 1 Filed: 08/16/00 Pag	e 10 of 15	PageiD	#:10		
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Ms. Evelyn Vargas street address				clude Area Code)	
T STATE AND ZIP CODE		<u> (7.73</u>	) 772	-9417 DATE OF BIRTH	
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THE PARTICULARS ARE (If additional space is needed, attach extra sheet(s)):		X CONTIN	NUING AC	TION	
I. i have been employed by Respondent since February 1996 as a Secretary. While employed I have been subjected to derogatory remarks regarding my national origin and other forms of harassment by management. In about February 1999 I asked the Administrator to stop this behavior. I am now being subjected to retaliation in that the harassment has escalated, I was demoted and I am now being subjected to discipline.  II. I believe that I have been discriminated against by Respondent because of my national origin, Puerto Rican and in retaliation, in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, in that:  a.) I was subjected to derogatory remarks regarding my national origin by my Supervisor. After I asked him to stop this behavior he continued to harass me. In April 1999 I was demoted in that I was moved from my work area and placed in a clerk's position. My daily activities are monitored and I am subjected to verbal abuse by management, sometimes in front of the public.  b.) I have now been disciplined on two occasions. Prior to this I had never received any discipline.					
EXHIBIT 'A"					
I want this charge filed with both the FFOC and the State on MOTARY					
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processing of my charge in accordance with their procedures   It is true to the hest of my knowledge intermediate					
I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true SIGNATURE OF			<u> </u>		
Date 9-14-CC Eucling Tarty (Signature)  SUBSCRIBED (Month, day and	AND SWORN year)	√ TO BEFOR	RE ME TI	HIS DATE	



# U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION Chicago District Office 500 Wes

500 West Madison St., Suite 2800 Chicago, H. 60661 PH: (312) 353-2713 TDD: (312) 353-2421 ENFORCEMENT FAX: (312) 886-1168 LEGAL FAX: (312) 353-8555

EEOC Charge Number: 210994350

Evelyn Vargas 2626 North Kimball Chicago, Illinois 60647

ν.

**Charging Party** 

City of Chicago, Department of Public Health 1713 South Ashland Chicago, Illinois 60608 Respondent

### **DETERMINATION**

Under the authority vested in me by the Commission's Procedural Regulations, I issue the following determination on the merits of the subject charge filed under the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, (Title VII). The Respondent is an employer within the meaning of Title VII and all other requirements for coverage have been met.

Charging Party alleges that she was discriminated against on the basis of her national origin, Puerto Rican, and retaliated against in that she was subjected to national origin harassment, harassed on the basis of her national origin, demoted, monitored, and disciplined.

I have determined that the evidence obtained in the investigation establishes reasonable cause to believe that Respondent has violated Title VII by subjecting Charging Party, and a class of employees, to a hostile and offensive work environment because of their national origin. This environment includes, but is not necessarily limited to, harassment, stereotyping, and offensive and derogatory comments and remarks about the employees' national origin.

EXHIBIT "B"

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EEOC Charge Number 210994350 Page 2 of 2

This determination is final. When the Commission finds that violations have occurred, it attempts to eliminate unlawful practices by informal methods of conciliation. Therefore, I invite the parties to join with the Commission in reaching a just resolution of this matter. Disclosure of information obtained by the Commission during the conciliation process will be made only in accordance with the Commission's Procedural Regulations (29 CFR Part 1601.26).

If the Respondent wishes to accept this invitation to participate in conciliation efforts, it may do so at this time by proposing terms for a conciliation agreement; that proposal should be provided to the Commission representative within 14 days of the date of this determination. The remedies for violations of the statutes we enforce are designed to make the identified victims whole and to provide corrective and preventive relief. These remedies may include, as appropriate, an agreement by the Respondent to not engage in unlawful employment practices, placement of identified victims in positions they would have held but for discriminatory actions, back pay, restoration of lost benefits, injunctive relief, compensatory and/or punitive damages, and notice to employees of the violation and the resolution of the claim.

Should the Respondent have further questions regarding the conciliation process or the conciliation terms it would like to propose, we encourage it to contact the assigned Commission representative. Should there be no response from the Respondent in 14 days, we may conclude that further conciliation efforts would be futile or nonproductive.

On Behalf of the Commission,

District Director



## U.S. Department Justice

### Civil Rights Division

### NOTICE OF RIGHT TO SUE WITHIN 90 DAYS

BLL:WBF:mdw DJ 170-23-272

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Employment Litigation Section P.O. Box 65968 Washington, D.C. 20035-5968 TDD# 1-800-578-5404

Evelyn Vargas 2626 North Kimball Chicago, Illinois 60647

MAY 18 2000

Re: Evelyn Vargas v. City of Chicago, Department of Public Health, EEOC No. 210-99-4350

-Dear Ms. Vargas:---

The Civil Rights Division has completely reviewed the file referred to us by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in its investigation of your charge of discrimination, and it has been determined that we will not file suit in this particular matter against the respondent. This should not be taken to mean that the Department of Justice has made a judgment as to whether or not your charge is meritorious.

You are hereby notified that conciliation in this matter was unsuccessful by the EEOC. You are further notified that you have the right to institute a civil action under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq., against the abovenamed respondent. If you choose to commence a civil action, such suit must be filed in the appropriate court within 90 days of your receipt of this Notice.

Therefore, you should consult an attorney of your own choosing at your earliest convenience. If you are unable to locate an attorney, you may wish to contact the EEOC, or apply to the appropriate court, since that court may appoint an attorney in appropriate circumstances under Section 706(f)(1) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. 2000e-5(f)(1).

We are returning the files in this matter to EEOC's Chicago District Office. If you or your attorney have any questions concerning this matter or wish to inspect the investigative file, please feel free to address your inquiry to: John P. Rowe, District Director, EEOC, 500 West Madison St., Suite 2800, Chicago, ILL 60661.

Sincerely,

Bill Lann Lee
Acting Assistant
Attorney General
Civil Rights Division

By:

William B. Fenton
Deputy Chief
Employment Litigation Section

EXABIT "C"

JS 44 (Rev. 12/96)

# $^{\smile}$ CIVIL COVER SHEET $^{\smile}$

The JS-44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

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150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	☐ 320 Assault, Libel & Slander	Product Liability  388 Asbestos Personal	☐ 630 Liquor Laws ☐ 640 R.R. & Truck	PROPERTY RIGHTS	☐ 460 Deportation ☐ 470 Racketeer Influenced and:
☐ 151 Medicare Act ☐ 152 Recovery of Defaulted	330 Federal Employers' Liability	injury Product Liability	☐ 650 Alriine Regs. ☐ 660 Occupational	☐ 820 Copyrights	Corrupt Organizations  B10 Selective Service
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245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property	☐ 444 Welfare ☐ 440 Other Civil Rights	☐ 535 Death Penalty ☐ 540 Mandamus & Other	790 Other Labor Litigation	870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant)	State Statutes  Bego Other Statutory Actions
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Case: 1:00-cv-05039 Document #: 1 Filed: 08/16/00 Page 15 of 15 PageID #.15

# UN' ED STATES DISTRICT COUP NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

In the Matter of

VARGAS V. CITY OF CHICAGO/ DRPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Case Number:



APPEARANCES ARE HEREBY FILED BY THE UNDERSIGNED AS ATTORNEY(S) FOR:

BUELYN UARGAS	.,	
MAGISTA	JUDGE LINDBERG	
(A)	JUDGE LINDBERG  AFE JUDGE ROBRICK  (B)	c 8
SIGNATURE Joseph & Wallen	SIGNATURE	S - S - S - S - S - S - S - S - S - S -
NAME JOSEPH M. WILLIAMS	NAME	- <del> </del>
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MEMBER OF TRIAL BAR?  YES NO   NO	MEMBER OF TRIAL BAR?	YES NO
TRIAL ATTORNEY?  YES  NO	TRIAL ATTORNEY?	YES NO
	DESIGNATED AS LOCAL COUNSEL?	YES NO
(C)	(D)	
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TELEPHONE NUMBER FAX NUMBER	TELEPHONE NUMBER	FAX NUMBER
E-MAIL ADDRESS	E-MAIL ADDRESS	1
IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (SEE ITEM 4 ON REVERSE)	IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (SEE ITEM 4 ON REVERSE)	
MEMBER OF TRIAL BAR?  YES NO	MEMBER OF TRIAL BAR?	YES NO D
TRIAL ATTORNEY? YES NO	TRIAL ATTORNEY?	YES NO D
DESIGNATED AS LOCAL COUNSEL? YES NO	DESIGNATED AS LOCAL COUNSEL?	YES NO